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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: U.S.-CHINA-TAIWAN RELATIONS

Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused news coverage May 3-5 on the investigation into Taiwan's Papua New Guinea fund scandal and on the New York Yankees' victory over the Seattle Mariners with Taiwan pitcher Wang Chien-ming winning his sixth game of the season. In terms of editorials and commentaries, an op-ed in the pro-independence "Liberty Times" criticized the incoming Ma Ying-jeou administration's policy of cross-Straits relations outweighing foreign affairs and the impact on relations between Taiwan and the United States. Another op-ed in the "Liberty Times" said the argument that cross-Straits peace can be achieved by cooperation in economic and trade relations between Taiwan and China is not necessarily consistent with the United States' Asia-Pacific security policy. End summary

A) "Cross-Straits [Relations] Outweighs Foreign Affairs, Four Big Mistakes"

Lai I-chung, the Principal Deputy Director of the Department of International Affairs of the DPP, opined in the pro-independence "Liberty Times" [circulation: 720,000] (5/5):

"... for countries with which [Taiwan] has no diplomatic relations, such as the United States, Japan, Europe, and India, the argument that cross-Straits [relations] outweigh foreign affairs will lead these countries to follow a logical line, which is to put their relations with Taiwan under their relations with China. It means that [whether their] relations with China are on good or bad terms will determine [their] relations with Taiwan. This will not only obstruct Taiwan's bilateral relations with these countries, but it also goes against Taiwan's attempt to persuade these non-ally countries to take a strategy parallel to their relations with China when they deal with Taiwan. [Ed. Note: "Ally" in the Taiwan political context refers to a country that has full diplomatic relations with Taiwan, such as Honduras or Swaziland, as opposed to a country that would actually defend Taiwan in a crisis.]

"In the report "A Twenty-First-Century Agenda for the U.S.-Taiwan Partnership" released in February, Randall Schriver and Daniel Blumenthal urged that Washington not subsume its relations with Taiwan under its relations with China. At the moment, however, Taiwan [President-elect Ma Ying-jeou's incoming administration] proposes a policy that [Taiwan's] relations with China should be in a higher position than its diplomatic relationship with countries such as the United States and Japan. This is not only retrograde with the advocacy of the China policy reformists in the United States, but it is also against Taiwan's practice in the past, which was to parallel its policy in cross-Straits [relations] and foreign affairs. This will cause a very serious impact on Taiwan's policy in foreign affairs. ..."

B) "The Conflict and Cooperation in the Cross-Straits Triangle"

Soong Hseik-wen, the director of the Graduate Institute of Strategy and International Affairs at Taiwan's National Chung Cheng

University, and Wang Jyh-perng, a student at the institute, opined in the pro-independence "Liberty Times" [circulation: 720,000] (5/5):

"How the triangular relations among the United States, China and Taiwan will develop after May 20 [inauguration day] is the most attention-getting issue recently. For example, the mitigation of the political atmosphere across the Strait might provide some positive inducements for economic, trade and culture exchanges. However, these [positive inducements] will not necessarily 'spill over' to policies such as security in the Taiwan Strait, arms sales from the United States to Taiwan, and the United States' Asia-Pacific security. ...

"In fact, the atmosphere and expectation of 'the argument that economic and trade exchange leads to peace' [across the Taiwan Strait] has a competitive and cooperative relation with the United States 'grand strategy' in Asia. This [grand strategy] has a deep-level relationship with the [issue of] security in Asia-Pacific resulting from the rise of China and the international balance of power [Lit: the allocation of international power.] In light of this, China obviously takes a 'rising' strategy which focuses on 'peace' and 'gradual advance.' For example, the 'China Modernization Report 2008' released this January [by the Chinese Academy of Sciences] came up with a strategy [called] 'a dove of peace,' whose purpose is to promote its diplomatic strategy of a peaceful rise. However, [China] still actively develops efficient capabilities to deny access to the region.

"According to a Chinese military report, during the Siew-Hu meeting at the Boao Forum [the meeting between Taiwan's Vice President-elect Vincent Siew and Chinese President Hu Jintao], Hu also reviewed the South Sea Fleet of China's navy and urged them 'to focus on preparation for military conflict and to reinforce the comprehensive establishment [of China's] military forces.' Regarding the United

States' [decision to] send two aircraft carrier battle groups to patrol the Taiwan Strait region, whether [the U.S.] is worried about internal developments in Taiwan or taking preventive measures to be alert of abnormal behavior by China or moves from Beijing because of the impact of the Tibet issue on the Olympic Games, neither the United States nor China has explicitly revealed the true reason. ..."

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